

VZCZCXRO5798
PP RUEHPA
DE RUEHDK #1144 1441632
ZNY SSSSS ZZH
P 241632Z MAY 07
FM AMEMBASSY DAKAR
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8407
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE

S E C R E T DAKAR 001144

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/W, AF/RSA, NEA/IR, DRL/AE AND INR/AA
LONDON FOR POL - AFRICA WATCHER
PARIS FOR POL - AFRICA WATCHER D,ELIA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/24/2017
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PINS](#) [MARR](#) [PTER](#) [GA](#) [IR](#) [SG](#)
SUBJECT: SENEGAL-GAMBIAN RELATIONS REMAIN TENSE

REF: A. BANJUL 258
[1](#)B. BANJUL 257

Classified By: POLITICAL OFFICER OSMAN N. TAT FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

[1](#)1. (S) Relations between Senegal and Gambia remain tense said Momar Gueye, Director of Asian and African Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Gueye cited the Gambian government,s continued belief that Senegal had a hand in a failed March 2006 coup plot against President Jammeh, rumors of arms purchases from Iran, arbitrary increases in the toll for ferries crossing the Gambia River, as well as Jammeh,s unpredictability and mental instability as contributing factors.

[1](#)2. (S) Following the recent sentencing and then immediate pardoning of five Senegalese customs officials who were accused of illegally crossing into Gambian territorial waters, PolOff went to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to assess the decision,s impact on bilateral relations. Gueye acknowledged that &tense8 does describe the relations between the two nations. He dismissed the customs case as trumped up charges and a weak attempt by The Gambia to underline to Senegal its sovereignty as a nation. He then lamented the fact that an agreement to revive a Permanent Secretariat, that was aimed to ease bilateral tensions before

SIPDIS

they come to a head, remained dead in the water. Gueye said that President Jammeh, whom the Senegalese Government views as paranoid and unstable, is still convinced that Senegal had a direct hand in a March 2006 plot to topple him because all of the coup leaders are currently in Senegal. Gueye refuted this accusation as absurd saying that if Senegal had wanted to annex The Gambia they could have done so in 1981 when they actually had troops in the country.

[1](#)3. (S) Gueye then confided that the Senegalese Government has information indicating that during a recent trip to Iran, President Jammeh had signed an agreement to purchase arms. There is information to corroborate this statement; yet it remains unclear what kind of arms he will purchase and why and by whom they will be used. This is not the first time that the Senegalese Government has brought this fact to our attention and rumors that Jammeh is arming Movement of Democratic Forces of the Casamance (MFDC) rebels persist. As Gueye wryly pointed out, &Senegal surrounds The Gambia, against whom do you think he plans on using these weapons?8

[1](#)4. (U) Visit Embassy Dakar,s SIPRNET website at <http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/af/dakar>.
JACOBS